India's rank among bio-diversified nations

†2471. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India figures amongst seven most bio-diversified nations of the world;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the balance between flora and fauna is getting disturbed in the country;

(c) whether due to lack of effective action to conserve the environment so far, the various species of flora and fauna are on the verge of extinction; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) India is one of the identified Megadiverse countries of the world.

(b) The Government is not aware of any such report indicating that balance between flora and fauna is getting disturbed in the country.

(c) and (d) It is a fact that the Biodiversity is under pressure due to various factors like pollution, poaching and other biotic pressure leading to decline in richness of a number of species. These issues are addressed at different levels through schemes such as National Parks, Sanctuaries and Biosphere Reserves for *in-situ* conservation of Biodiversity and through Regional Botanical Gardens and Gene Banks for *ex-situ* conservation.

Permission to companies for mining in Fifth Schedule areas

2472. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) how many permissions have been given to companies for various works including mining in Fifth Schedule areas since the formation of present Government; and

(b) the details of companies and the States where such permission has been given?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Import of scrap

†2473. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India imports scrap from overseas;

(b) if so, the kind of this scrap and the purpose for which the same is used; and

(c) whether this scrap adversely affect the environment in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) It is a fact that India imports scrap comprising of steel scrap and non-ferrous metal scrap and plastics scrap. These scraps are imported for recycling and reprocessing. Steel scarp is freely importable. Import of non-ferrous metal and plastic scarp are regulated under the Hazardous Wastes (Management and Handling) Rules 1989 and amendments notified there of under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992.

(c) Reprocessing and recycling of scarp is beneficial to the environment from the point of view of conservation of resources and energy. The import of scrap is only allowed to the units capable of re-processing them in an environmentally sound manner.

Shortage of refrigerated containers at Ports

2474. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is shortage of refrigerated containers at ports which hamper expport of seafoods;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry has taken up the issue with the Ministry of Shipping in this regard;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.